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It is impossible to determine from the very preliminary and tentative statement of the Soviet proposal for a cease-fire in Korea, whether the USSR would prefer merely to start discussions of the terms for a cease fire without necessarily expecting to come to a prompt agreement, or whether the USSR would be willing to accept immediately the previously announced UN conditions for a cease fire and proceed directly with negotiations for a final termination of hostilities. It is possible that the USSR suggested that "discussions should be started between the belligerents" without any firm intention of submitting to the UN conditions.

Whether or not the USSR intends to pursue its suggestion for discussions to the point of actually concluding a firm truce on terms acceptable to the UN, the move taken by the USSR in calling for a cease fire has many advantages for the Communist position throughout the world. In the first place, the mere announcement of a Soviet "desire" to take steps to bring about a cease fire in Korea is a potent propaganda weapon in the USSR "peace" campaign. Secondly, the popular and official desire in many UN countries to find some way out of the Korean war will have a divisive effect within and among these countries and will tend to isolate advocates of a hard anti-Communist policy with respect to Korea. Thirdly, if the pre-negotiation discussions should be protracted (as they could, if it were to Communist advantage) they might further dampen the rate

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of rearmament and mobilization among the non-Communist countries, in general, and the NATO countries in particular. Finally, the pre-negotiation discussions could serve to interrupt successful UN military action in Korea at a point where important military positions in North Korea are about to be overrun as well as during a season of the year particularly favorable to the use of mechanized ground equipment and naval and air power.

We believe that the Kremlin probably is encouraging the opening of cease fire discussions more with a view of exploiting these political advantages than because of any military conclusion. ~~It is not likely~~ to end the Korean campaign. On the other hand, it is possible that the military position in Korea has reached a point where Communist forces cannot strike decisive counterblows against the UN forces without the commitment of Soviet forces at a great rate increased risk of a war with the US. In these circumstances, we believe that the USSR would be unwilling at present to provoke such a war. ~~and the USSR would be unwilling~~ For these reasons the possibility cannot be excluded that the Malik statement was made in an attempt to salvage by a local diplomatic settlement the Communist position in Korea. Even if this was true, the main Soviet tactic in pursuing a negotiation for a cease fire would be to exploit them to the maximum to achieve compensating political and possibly military gains elsewhere in the world.

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